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09/772,320	01/25/2001	Anoop Gupta	MS1-674US	7680

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EXAMINER
CHOUDHURY, AZIZUL Q

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2145	

DATE MAILED: 07/28/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	09/772,320	GUPTA ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Azizul Choudhury	2145	

-- *The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address* --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed
  after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
  Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any
  earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *11 April 2005*.

2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☐ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is
closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-18, 20-21 and 27-37* is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-18, 20-21 and 27-37* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *1/25/01* is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage
application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3)☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date *6/00 - 4/05*.

4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .

5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6)☐ Other: _____ .

Detailed Action

This office action is in response to the correspondence received on April 11, 2005.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter, which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Claim 1 now features the trait "accepting commands, made available by an electronic mail program for manipulating electronic mail messages that are not collaborative electronic mail messages, to manipulate the collaborative electronic mail message..." It is not clear how a collaborative email message can be manipulated with commands not intended for it.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

Claims 1-15, 18-21, 27-33 and 36-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as

being anticipated by Hanson et al (US Pat No: US006463461B1), hereafter referred to

as Hanson.

1.   With regards to claim 1, Hanson teaches a method comprising: receiving from

an electronic mail server an indication of a collaborative electronic mail message that

includes a portion for feedback from one or more recipients; displaying an identifier of

the collaborative electronic mail message for viewing by a user; accepting commands,

made available by an electronic mail program for manipulating electronic mail

messages that are not collaborative electronic mail messages, to manipulate the

collaborative electronic mail message; and performing an accepted command, wherein

the performing includes sending to the electronic mail server an indication of the

command so that the electronic mail server can modify the collaborative electronic mail

message in accordance with the command and notify recipients of the modification

(Hanson's teaches a design enabling users to communicate and collaborate among a

group of participants (column 2, line 24 – column 3, line 34, Hanson). The design

allows for a server to provide the collaborative messages (Figure 1, Hanson). The

design also allows the messages to be emails (column 2, line 56, Hanson). Finally,

Hanson's design has the server attached to the client machines through a network

(Figure 1, Hanson). Each client has it's own software interface by which to

communicate to the server with via commands (column 2, lines 44-51, Hanson). In

software interfaces, it is inherent that when a user enters data and makes a request in

the software, the request along with the data is converted to a command, which is sent

to the server. The software interfaces translates the commands by which the client and

server communicate with one another, into data that is understandable by the user).

2.   With regards to claims 2, 3, 4, 5, and 28-30, Hanson teaches a method wherein

the commands to manipulate the collaborative electronic mail message include reply,

forward, delete and flag commands (The claimed features are inherent within email

systems. Hanson's disclosure teaches a collaborative messaging system that uses

email (column 2, line 24 – column 3, line 34, Hanson)).

3.   With regards to claim 6, Hanson teaches a method wherein the indication

comprises the collaborative electronic mail message (Hanson's design has indications

comprised within collaborative emails (column 11, lines 32-42, Hanson)).

4.   With regards to claim 7, Hanson teaches a method wherein the identifier includes

a subject of the collaborative electronic mail message and an author of the collaborative

electronic mail message (The claimed feature is inherent within emails. Hanson's

design allows for the use of emails (column 2, line 56, Hanson). Furthermore, Hanson's

design allows for the creator's address to be listed along with other addresses (column

8, lines 27-49, Hanson)).

5.   With regards to claim 8, Hanson teaches a method wherein the identifier includes

a size of the collaborative electronic mail message, including all of the content of the

collaborative electronic mail message (The claimed feature is inherent within emails.

Hanson's design allows for the use of emails (column 2, line 56, Hanson)).

6.   With regards to claim 9, Hanson teaches a method wherein the collaborative

electronic mail message further includes a graph of responses to the collaborative

electronic mail message (Hanson's design allows for dynamic portions to exist within

the message/email. The dynamic portion allows for graphs/charts (Figure 4, Hanson)).

7.   With regards to claim 10, Hanson teaches a method further comprising:

receiving a user selection of a portion of the graph; and indicating which of a plurality of

comments in the portion for feedback correspond to the selected portion of the graph

(Hanson's design allows for dynamic portions to exist within the message/email. The

dynamic portion allows for graphs/charts (Figure 4, Hanson). It also allows for user

interaction).

8.   With regards to claim 11, Hanson teaches a method wherein the user selection

comprises positioning of a cursor over the portion of the graph (Hanson's design allows

for messages/emails to have dynamic portions to them. This includes charts/graphs

and user interaction portions (Figure 4, Hanson). In a design that allows for the use of

computers with interface tools such as a keyboard and mouse (column 5, lines 39-44,

Hanson) and allows for dynamic portions where users are able to make the changes in

a message and have all other affiliated messages updated as well (column 2, lines 23-

34, Hanson), it is inherent that the cursor feature claimed is present within Hanson's

design).

9.   With regards to claim 12, Hanson teaches a method wherein the portion of the

graph comprises a bar of a bar graph (Hanson's design allows for graphical images

such as charts to be present (Figure 4, Hanson) (column 10, lines 45-56, Hanson)).

10.   With regards to claim 13, Hanson teaches a method further comprising:

receiving a user selection of a portion of the graph; and indicating which of the one or

more recipients corresponds to the portion of the graph (Hanson's design allows for

dynamic portions allowing for user input (Figure 4, Hanson), which by inputting updates

the corresponding messages (column 2, lines 23-34, Hanson). Hanson's design allows

for a wide array of dynamic input including forms and polls as well as charts (column 10,

lies 45-67, Hanson)).

11.   With regards to claim 14, Hanson teaches a method wherein a recipient

corresponds to the portion of the graph if the recipient's response to the collaborative

electronic mail message is reflected in the portion (Hanson's design allows for

responses to be made and they are updated to the corresponding messages (column 2,

lines 23-51, Hanson)).

12.   With regards to claim 15, Hanson teaches a method wherein indicating which of

the one or more recipients corresponds to the portion of the graph comprises displaying

which of the one or more recipients corresponds to the portion in a box separate from

the collaborative electronic mail message (Hanson's design allows for separate portions

of the message/email (Figure 4, Hanson)).

13.   With regards to claim 18, Hanson teaches a method further comprising:

changing the identifier when the collaborative electronic mail message is opened by the

user; receiving an indication that the collaborative electronic mail message has been

modified; and changing the identifier again to visually indicate that the collaborative

electronic mail message has been modified (Hanson's design allows for

messages/emails to be updated when the message is opened to display the current

information since some information is dynamic (column 4, lines 21-45, Hanson)).

14.   With regards to claim 20, further comprising: including, in the identifier, an

indication of an author of the collaborative electronic mail message (The claimed feature

is inherent within emails. Hanson's design allows for the use of emails (column 2, line

56, Hanson). Furthermore, Hanson's design allows for the creator's address to be listed

along with other addresses (column 8, lines 27-49, Hanson)).

15.   With regards to claim 21, Hanson teaches a one or more computer-readable

memories containing a computer program that is executable by a processor to perform

the method (Hanson's design has the design performed by computers (column 5, lines

26-52, Hanson)).

16.   With regards to claim 27, Hanson teaches one or more computer-readable media

having stored thereon a plurality of instructions that, when executed by one or more

processors of a computer, cause the one or more processors to perform acts including:

displaying a plurality of user-selectable options for control of electronic mail messages

by a client-side portion of an electronic mail program; and allowing the plurality of user-

selectable options to also control collaborative electronic mail messages; wherein when

a user-selectable option is selected for a collaborative electronic mail message an

indication of the option is sent to a server-side portion of the electronic mail program so

that the server-side portion of the electronic mail program can apply that option to the

collaborative electronic mail message (Hanson's teaches a design enabling users to

communicate and collaborate among a group of participants (column 2, line 24 –

column 3, line 34, Hanson). The design allows for a server to provide the collaborative

messages (Figure 1, Hanson). The design also allows the messages to be emails

(column 2, line 56, Hanson). Finally, Hanson's design has the server attached to the

client machines through a network (Figure 1, Hanson). Each client has it's own

software interface by which to communicate to the server with via commands (column 2,

lines 44-51, Hanson). In software interfaces, it is inherent that when a user enters data

and makes a request in the software, the request along with the data is converted to a

command, which is sent to the server. The software interfaces translates the

commands by which the client and server communicate with one another, into data that

is understandable by the user. Finally it is also inherent that with a software interface,

that the claimed feature of displaying a plurality of user-selectable options for control is

also present within the design).

17.   With regards to claim 31, Hanson' teaches one or more computer-readable

media, wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to

perform acts including accessing, during creation of a new collaborative electronic mail

message, an electronic contact list to identify an electronic mail address for a recipient

of the collaborative electronic mail message (Hanson's design allows for a list of

addresses (contact list) (column 8, lines 27-49, Hanson)).

18.   With regards to claim 32, Hanson' teaches one or more computer-readable

media, wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to

perform acts including: displaying a user-selectable reminder option; and sending, in

response to selection of the reminder option, a reminder of a previously sent

collaborative electronic mail message to one or more recipients of the previously sent

collaborative electronic mail message (Hanson' disclosure teaches a design that has

notification means (column 9, line 1, Hanson) and alert means (column 7, lines 40-42,

Hanson)).

19.   With regards to claim 33, Hanson teaches one or more computer-readable media wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts including: displaying a user-selectable summary option; and in response to selection of the summary option, sending a summary, to one or more recipients of the previously sent collaborative electronic mail message, of responses received to a previously sent collaborative electronic mail message (Hanson's design allows users to enter subjects, comments, choices, fill out polls or perform other summary options (column 8, lines 50-62, Hanson)).

20.   With regards to claim 36, Hanson teaches one or more computer-readable media wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts including: identifying, to an author of a collaborative electronic mail message at the computer, how many recipients have not yet opened the collaborative electronic mail message; and identifying, to the author, how many recipients have responded to the collaborative electronic mail message (Hanson's design allows for a the users to view who within a list has opened the message/email (column 8, lines 27-62, Hanson)).

21.   With regards to claim 37, Hanson teaches one or more computer-readable media, further comprising identifying, to the author, how many recipients have opened but not responded to the collaborative electronic mail message (Hanson's design allows

for users to view if the participants within the list responded or not to the message/email

(column 8, lines 27-62, Hanson)).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 16, 17, 34 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Hanson in view of Conmy et al (US Pat No: US006101480A),

hereafter referred to as Conmy.

22.   With regards to claim 16, Hanson teaches through Conmy, a method further

comprising: comparing a time identified in the collaborative electronic mail message

with an electronic calendar corresponding to the user; determining whether a conflict

exists between the time identified in the collaborative electronic mail message and a

pre-existing commitment in the electronic calendar; and if a conflict exists, then

displaying an indication of the conflict

(Hanson's teaches a design enabling users to communicate and collaborate

among a group of participants (column 2, line 24 – column 3, line 34, Hanson). While

Hanson' disclosure discusses the use of an email client, it fails to discuss the use of an email client with scheduling means.

Conmy teaches a design for a calendar scheduling program (column 1, lines 49-53, Conmy). The design allows for meeting time conflict resolution as claimed (column 2, lines 18-32, Conmy). In addition, the design is intended for use with email systems (column 9, lines 10-15, Conmy).

Hence, Hanson' disclosure teaches a design combining instant messaging with email; it fails to discuss an email with scheduling means. Conmy's design features a scheduling design for email systems. Thus, it would have been obvious, at the time the invention was made, to combine the teachings of Hanson with those of Conmy to provide a powerful C&S (calendar and scheduling) product line for email users (column 10, lines 34-36, Conmy)).

23. With regards to claim 17, Hanson teaches through Conmy, a method further comprising: comparing a time identified in the collaborative electronic mail message with an electronic task list corresponding to the user; determining whether a conflict exists between the time identified in the collaborative electronic mail message and a pre-existing task in the electronic task list; and if a conflict exists, then displaying an indication of the conflict

(Hanson's teaches a design enabling users to communicate and collaborate among a group of participants (column 2, line 24 – column 3, line 34, Hanson). While

Hanson' disclosure discusses the use of an email client, it fails to discuss the use of an email client with scheduling means.

Conmy teaches a design for a calendar scheduling program (column 1, lines 49-53, Conmy). The design allows for meeting time conflict resolution as claimed (column 2, lines 18-32, Conmy). In addition, the design is intended for use with email systems (column 9, lines 10-15, Conmy).

Hence, Hanson' disclosure teaches a design combining instant messaging with email; it fails to discuss an email with scheduling means. Conmy's design features a scheduling design for email systems. Thus, it would have been obvious, at the time the invention was made, to combine the teachings of Hanson with those of Conmy to provide a powerful C&S (calendar and scheduling) product line for email users (column 10, lines 34-36, Conmy)).

24.   With regards to claim 34, Hanson teaches through Conmy, one or more computer-readable media wherein the plurality of instructions further cause the one or more processors to perform acts including: accessing an electronic calendar maintained by a task manager component; and identifying conflicts between times included in the collaborative electronic mail messages and commitments in the electronic calendar

(Hanson's teaches a design enabling users to communicate and collaborate among a group of participants (column 2, line 24 – column 3, line 34, Hanson). While

Hanson' disclosure discusses the use of an email client, it fails to discuss the use of an email client with scheduling means.

Conmy teaches a design for a calendar scheduling program (column 1, lines 49-53, Conmy). The design allows for meeting time conflict resolution as claimed (column 2, lines 18-32, Conmy). In addition, the design is intended for use with email systems (column 9, lines 10-15, Conmy).

Hence, Hanson' disclosure teaches a design combining instant messaging with email; it fails to discuss an email with scheduling means. Conmy's design features a scheduling design for email systems. Thus, it would have been obvious, at the time the invention was made, to combine the teachings of Hanson with those of Conmy to provide a powerful C&S (calendar and scheduling) product line for email users (column 10, lines 34-36, Conmy)).

25.   With regards to claim 35, Hanson teaches through Conmy, one or more computer-readable media wherein the identifying comprises identifying conflicts between commitments in the electronic calendar and collaborative electronic mail messages being authored at the computer as well as collaborative electronic mail messages received at the computer

(Hanson's teaches a design enabling users to communicate and collaborate among a group of participants (column 2, line 24 – column 3, line 34, Hanson). While Hanson' disclosure discusses the use of an email client, it fails to discuss the use of an email client with scheduling means.

Conmy teaches a design for a calendar scheduling program (column 1, lines 49-53, Conmy). The design allows for meeting time conflict resolution as claimed (column 2, lines 18-32, Conmy). In addition, the design is intended for use with email systems (column 9, lines 10-15, Conmy).

Hence, Hanson' disclosure teaches a design combining instant messaging with email; it fails to discuss an email with scheduling means. Conmy's design features a scheduling design for email systems. Thus, it would have been obvious, at the time the invention was made, to combine the teachings of Hanson with those of Conmy to provide a powerful C&S (calendar and scheduling) product line for email users (column 10, lines 34-36, Conmy)).

Remarks

The amendment received on April 11, 2005 has been carefully evaluated but is not deemed fully persuasive. The examiner has first evaluated the remarks submitted with the amendment and in response reevaluated the prior arts and the office action. After the reevaluation, it was determined that the rejection must continue to stand. Within the remarks, the applicant's representative expresses concern over the Hanson design using a web server to fulfill the email operations with the assistance of a web interface on the client side. The applicant's design makes use of a user who interacts with the email system as remarked upon by the applicant's representative. The examiner would like to clarify that the "email system" (last line, p. 12) spoken of by the applicant's representative must inherently contain a server of some form. The client

email request must be fulfilled and hence a server must be present. Hence, the

applicant's deign features a client email application and a server, and the Hanson

design features an email application (the application interface is web based but it's

intended purpose and function is still the same as the claimed design) as well as a

server. Therefore the examiner has decided to stand with the rejection.

Furthermore, a new 112 rejection has been formulated in response to the

amendment made to claim 1. The new rejection has been provided due to amended

material that makes the claim language contradictory. It is unclear how a collaborative

email message can be manipulated by commands not for collaborative email

messages.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time

policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE

MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within

TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not

mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the

shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any

extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later

than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Azizul Choudhury whose telephone number is (571) 272-3909. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Valencia Martin-Wallace can be reached on (571) 272-6159. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

AC

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